In the Claims

1. (currently amended) An outsole assembly comprising:

an outsole having an inner surface ~~including~~, an outer surface, and an opening extending from said inner surface to said outer surface; ~~and~~

a footbed positioned over ~~the~~ an area of said inner surface of ~~the~~ said outsole; ~~the footbed having~~ and

a ~~lower surface including a~~ plug ~~configured to be inserted into the~~ placed in said opening for enhancing comfort.

2. (original) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the footbed is formed of a material having a first hardness characteristic that is less than an outsole material having a second hardness characteristic.

3. (original) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the plug is formed of a material having a first hardness characteristic that is less than an outsole material having a second hardness characteristic.

4. (original) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the footbed and the plug are formed of a material having substantially the same hardness characteristic.

5. (original) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the outsole is formed of a material having an A-scale durometer hardness in a range between 60A and 100A.

6. (original) The assembly of claim 5 wherein the footbed and the plug are formed of a material having an A-scale durometer hardness in a range between 30A and 60A.

7. (original) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the opening is positioned in a heel region of the inner surface of the outsole.

8. (original) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the plug includes a pedestal section and a cap section, the pedestal section being connected to the outer surface of the footbed.

9. (original) The assembly of claim 8 wherein the cap section includes an outer peripheral edge having an outer perimeter and an inner peripheral edge having an inner perimeter, the inner peripheral edge being connected to the pedestal section having a pedestal perimeter.

10. (currently amended) The assembly of claim 9 wherein the outer perimeter is ~~the~~ substantially the same as the inner perimeter.

11. (original) The assembly of claim 10 wherein the inner perimeter is larger than the pedestal perimeter.

12. (original) The assembly of claim 11 wherein the inner peripheral edge forms a projecting lip when connected to the pedestal section.

13. (original) The assembly of claim 12 wherein the opening of the outsole has:

an opening perimeter that is less than the inner perimeter; and

a corresponding matching perimeter for mating with the pedestal perimeter.

14. (original) The assembly of claim 13 wherein the pedestal peripheral dimension mated with the opening peripheral dimension forms a watertight seal between the outsole and the footbed.

15. (original) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the opening is an aperture that extends through to a walking surface of the outsole.

16. (original) The assembly of claim 15 wherein the outsole has a walking surface including an indented surface corresponding to the inserted plug.

17. (original) The assembly of claim 16 wherein the indented surface is a non-contact surface with a walking ground.

18. (currently amended) A method comprising:

providing an outsole having an inner surface ~~including an opening; and~~ and an outer surface;

extending an opening from the inner surface to the outer surface;

positioning a footbed over an area of the inner surface ~~the~~ of said outsole~~, the footbed having an outer surface including~~ ; and

placing a plug ~~configured to be inserted into~~ in the opening for enhancing comfort.

19. (original) The method of claim 18 further comprising forming the footbed using a material having a first hardness characteristic that is less than an outsole material having a second hardness characteristic.

20. (original) The method of claim 18 further comprising forming the plug using a material having a first hardness characteristic that is less than an outsole material having a second hardness characteristic.

21. (original) The method of claim 18 further comprising using a material having an A-scale durometer hardness in a range between 60A and 100A for the outsole.

22. (original) The method of claim 18 further comprising using a material having an A-scale durometer hardness in a range between 30A and 60A for the footbed and the plug.

23. (currently amended) The method of claim 18 further comprising ~~positioned~~ positioning the opening in a heel region in the inner surface of the outsole.

24. (original) The method of claim 18 further comprising providing a pedestal section and a cap section in the plug wherein the pedestal section is connected to the outer surface of the footbed.

25. (original) The method fo claim 24 further comprising forming a projected lip by connecting the cap section to the pedestal section.

26. (cancelled).

27. (currently amended) The footwear assembly of claim ~~26~~28 wherein the footbed is formed of a material having a first hardness characteristic that is less than an outsole material having a second hardness characteristic.

28. (new) An outsole assembly, comprising:
an outsole having an inner surface, a heel area, and a toe area;
an opening extending downwardly from said inner surface into said outsole;
a footbed extending from said heel area to said toe area;
said footbed positioned over said inner surface of said outsole; and
a plug placed in said opening for enhancing comfort.

29. (new) The outsole according to claim 28, wherein said plug includes a first protrusion having a first periphery in contact with a lower surface of said footbed and wherein said plug further includes a second protrusion having a second periphery, where said second periphery is larger than said first periphery, in contact with said first protrusion and wherein said first and second protrusions extend downwardly into said opening.